

## **Frequently Asked Questions for the July Four County Sampling**

### **Q: Why are samples being taken?**

A: Southern California has a number of natural seeps. The Refugio oil spill occurred in a natural seep area. In order to ensure that cleanup is complete, a monitoring and maintenance plan has been put in place. In order to monitor beaches effectively, the response needed a “snapshot” of what the beaches believed to have been affected look like.

### **Q: How many samples are being taken?**

A: Multiple samples will be taken from a variety of locations from Gaviota Beach in Santa Barbara to Newport Beach in Orange County.

### **Q: When will they be released?**

A: Results may take a few weeks to be processed, but as soon as they are complete, they will be provided to the Unified Command which will release them to the public.

### **Q: Is this sampling and monitoring special and just for the Refugio Spill?**

A: No. Ongoing beach monitoring is one of many tools available to responders to ensure cleanup is complete. As each oil spill is different, this tool is applied when appropriate.

### **Q: Who is doing the sampling?**

A: The samples are being split and the **United States Coast Guard**, Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) and the responsible party will be processing them in separate laboratories.

### **Q: What are we sampling for?**

A: The tests will be looking for source either natural seep or other.

### **Q: Who designed the sampling plan and approved it?**

A: Scientific experts from state and federal agencies participating in the response drafted the plan for the Unified Command to approve. Local and non-government organizational concerns were addressed as part of the plan.

**Q: Why are the non-governmental organizations and local government officials here?**

A: There is a strong community investment in the protection and recovery of Southern California beaches. This monitoring plan helps local government and NGOs ensure that cleanup meets their expectations.

**Q: What will you do if the samples come back as Refugio oil?**

A: Beaches with a positive match for Refugio oil will be reassessed to determine further cleanup needs.